

CONFIDENTIAL.]

[No. 27 of 1902.

REPORT (PART II)

ON

NATIVE-OWNED ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS IN BENGAL

FOR THE

Week ending Saturday, 5th July 1902.

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REPORT (ART. 1)

ACTIVE-GUARD EXPERIMENT IN HENGA

Work done by the

II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

903. The following paragraph is taken from the *Bengalee*:—

The quartering of punitive police. The quartering of punitive police forces seems to be the order of the day. And no less than four such police forces have been located in three different districts and the notifications issued in the last number of the *Calcutta Gazette* have been quoted elsewhere. We must be pardoned if we decline to accept this as a proof of vigorous Executive Government. On the contrary, it seems to us that the adoption of this extraordinary measure is the last resort of a weak administration which apprehends disturbances where there are none, and which is frightened at spectres which are the creatures of fancy. The public will strongly disapprove of this frequent adoption of an extraordinary procedure intended only to meet critical situations.

BENGALIEE,
27th June 1902.

904. The *Bengalee* draws the attention of the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, to the letter of one Kadar Mull Hankai Mull, merchant of Bara Bazar, who complains that his servant, after cashing *hundies* amounting to Rs. 4,000, was induced by three men to part with Rs. 3,900. With the remaining Rs. 100 the servant was arrested by the Diamond Harbour police and has since been kept in *hajat*, while two of the accused were released by the police and the third absconded.

BENGALIEE,
29th June 1902.

Complaint against the Calcutta Police.

The journal reflects that it is a matter of the first importance that the operations of the police should inspire confidence in the minds of the Indian trading community.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

905. Referring to the conviction of six men by Mr. Vernède, Joint-Magistrate of Chittagong, on a charge of making a row in the verandah of his Court-room, the *Hindoo Patriot* says:—

HINDOO PATRIOT,
23rd June 1902.

They are stated to have been allowed no opportunity to produce any evidence or make any statement in support of their defence. Such a procedure is quite unheard of in the British constitutional system, which provides for due protection of law even to the worst criminal offender. The High Court severely censured him the other day for having shown a lamentable failure of judicial discretion in the Jalpaiguri case. If the strictures of the highest tribunal of the country be not found sufficient to awaken him to a due sense of duty and bring him to reason, it is useless for us to cry in wilderness any more.

906. Commenting on the case in which the Subdivisional Officer of Sirajganj and the Magistrate of Pabna insisted upon the personal appearance in Court of a respectable Hindu *pardanashin* lady, the *Bengalee* remarks:—

BENGALIEE,
23rd June 1902.

"The requirements of justice do not make her personal presence in Court an imperative necessity. Those requirements could be satisfied equally well in her absence as in her presence. We should not, therefore, be liable to the charge of exaggeration if we were to say that this insistence on the part of the Magistrate of Sirajganj on her presence in Court is an instance of wanton executive high-handedness to which it would be difficult to find a parallel even in these days of executive omnipotence. And the High Court has sanctioned this act with its august approval! * * * And yet from the supplementary portion of their judgment, one cannot help concluding that there was a lurking suspicion in their minds that it would be better if the Magistrate should allow the lady to appear by agent, and so the learned Judges hesitatingly throw out a mild suggestion to the Magistrate, hoping thereby to cause an alteration in his conduct. Where they could have commanded, they have elected only to recommend. And though in this particular case their recommendation may be acted upon, we have not the slightest doubt that mischievous consequences will not be slow to follow as a legitimate result of their judgment."

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
24th June 1902.

907. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, commenting on the judgment of the Sessions Judge of Barisal who convicted three men to death for the murder of one, remarks:—

"It is a physical impossibility that several persons, when causing the death of one, should each be guilty of the crime of murder or that anybody would find out whose hand it is which really causes death. Thus in civilized countries, cases of gang-murder generally end not in judicial murders, but in the transportation of the accused. It is only in India that the sight, shocking as it must be admitted to be, is seen of several persons hanging in a horrible row for the murder of one. And the sight is not infrequent too."

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
27th June 1902.

908. A correspondent from Darbhanga, writing in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, asks for the location in that district of a Sub-Judge and another Munsif vested with the power to try suits up to Rs. 2,000, as at present considerable inconvenience and expense are felt by suitors who have to proceed to Muzaffarpur for the trial of their suits.

(e)—*Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.*

BENGALIEE,
26th June 1902.

909. Referring to the consternation created by the snapping of an electric wire in Bentinck Street, the *Bengalee* observes:—

Overhead electric wires. These accidents are of frequent occurrence, and overhead wires are a serious menace to the public safety. Is the Government going to sacrifice the safety of the public for the sake of the Electric Supply Company? Are the interests of a few European capitalists of such paramount concern to the Government that even the public safety is to be considered as a minor consideration when compared with them? On behalf of the public we would earnestly appeal to the Government to lose no time to direct that the wires should be laid underground and that no overhead wires should be permitted in any case. Our public bodies should move in the matter without the least possible delay.

(g)—*Railways and Communications, including Canals and Irrigation.*

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
25th June 1902.

910. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, in informing its readers that the European guard who assaulted the telegraph operator at Dongargarh was fined Re. 1 for doing so, by the District Traffic Superintendent, says:—

Assault by a European guard on a native. In the shoe-laying case the trying Magistrate held that Mr. Bayley had by his act taught Yeswant Gopal a lesson in politeness. In the case under notice the District Traffic Superintendent holds that a fine of Re. 1 is sufficient punishment for a European guard who strikes an Indian employé doing his duty manfully. Who can, after this, deny that matters are improving on the Bengal-Nagpur line?

(h)—*General.*

BEHAR NEWS,
21st June 1902.

911. The *Behar News* thanks Mr. H. D. Carey, Magistrate of Murshidabad, for the order he recently issued to the police of his district that they are not to provide for his necessities when out on tour, and hopes that his brother officials will follow the noble example set by him.

BENGALIEE,
23rd June 1902.

The *rasad* system. 912. The *Bengalee* says that Mr. Thorburn's idea of subsidising journals published in the vernaculars of each province, to counteract the teachings of the native press, is an old one. It has been thought of carefully, deliberated upon and finally abandoned. In the reconstituted Councils, vested with the right of interpellation, the Government, says the writer, is provided with the means of explanation and defence.

Subsidised Government newspapers. As to the demands of the educated community which, being ventilated through the press, permeate the minds of the masses and make it necessary, in

Mr. Thorburn's opinion, to have State-aided papers, the *Bengalee* classifies them under three heads—

- (1) The association of the people in the Government of the country through the medium of representative institutions.
- (2) Their wider employment in the higher offices of the State.
- (3) The raising of the material status of the country by diminishing the drain and stimulating the growth of indigenous arts and manufactures, and remarks:—

Are these complaints true or are they malicious libels, scattered broadcast by an irresponsible press at war with the authorities? If there is any truth in them, they should be redressed, and the dissatisfaction which prevails will disappear. If there is no truth in them, those who make them will be discredited and they cannot long make them with any regard for their own interests.

913. The *Bengalee* says that in view of the fact that India has to meet her own Coronation bill in January next, it would have been but an act of bare justice to India if she had been spared the cost that the furnishing of the India Office for the reception of His Majesty the King will impose on her. Wealthy England can surely afford to be generous to her poor dependency on an occasion like the Coronation.

BENGALÉE,
25th June 1902.

914. The *Bengalee* remarks that one reason of the frequency of poisoning in Calcutta is to be found in the absence of any restriction on the sale of poisonous drugs, and that although the attention of Government has often been attracted to this matter, the "wit of our legislators has failed to devise a measure which will secure the object aimed at, consequently no action whatever has been taken in the matter."

BENGALÉE,
26th June 1902.

915. Referring to the "odious" regulations under which the Natu Brothers were imprisoned without a trial, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* says that if the regulations were not in existence, the Government would have been obliged to secure some evidence before arresting them.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
26th June 1902.

"But Nemesis followed shortly after. The deportation was followed by an awakening of the sense that the step taken had been a foolish and unjustifiable one. It was discovered that the Natus had been put in confinement without any evidence against them. And then the thought occurred to the authorities—what to do with them? To release them quietly would be to confess that the Government had acted unjustly and vindictively. So to restore them to liberty was out of the question. It was thus resolved to keep them in confinement at whatever cost. And when the Government was asked to explain why it had kept the two brothers as prisoners, it had to stammer out its replies with a bent head."

Lord George Hamilton's rule, remarks the writer, is a record of repression from the beginning of his connection with India up to the present time. Does not His Lordship, he asks, wince when he is reminded of the many contradictory pleas he has been obliged to bring forward to justify the confinement of the Natu Brothers and the not very dignified part he has had to play in connection with the affair from beginning to the end?

916. While expressing its satisfaction generally with the Honours' List, the *Bengalee* adds:—

BENGALÉE,
29th June 1902.

The Coronation Honours' List We find that not a single gentleman or nobleman of East Bengal finds a place in the Honours' List though many of them richly deserve it. As for those who have not received any honours but who subscribed large sums in the hope of getting them, we can only say that we deeply sympathise with them in their misery. But let them persevere—let them continue to subscribe handsomely with a view to please officials—and success will crown their efforts.

917. The following appears in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*:—

Ibid. The Honours' list is exceedingly satisfactory; Europeans have been more liberally blessed than Indians, and this is just as it should be. We would not have been much sorry if the Indians were altogether excluded from the list. We know there are

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
29th June 1902.

many amongst our countrymen who value such honours, but they are generally not men of sound sense. Instead of conferring those honours on Indians, the Government can benefit them in other ways, as, for instance, by providing them with means of subsistence. The condition of the higher classes is getting, day by day, more and more desperate, and they are in greater need of employment than empty decorations.

III.—LEGISLATION.

HINDOO PATRIOT,
24th June 1902.

918. The *Hindoo Patriot* comments as follows on the refusal of the Government of Bengal to amend the Putni Regulation (VIII of 1819) as memorialized by the British Indian Association.

The amendment of the Putni Law of Bengal.

It is difficult to conceive on whose account the Board of Revenue felt a solicitude in opposing this measure of legislative reform, and it is very much to be regretted that such a large-hearted administrator as Sir John Woodburn has been led to set his face against such a commendable innovation. We still entertain the hope that the matter will merit a careful consideration before Sir John Woodburn retires.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

INDIAN MIRROR,
24th June 1902.

919. The following leader is taken from the *Indian Mirror* :—

The Sivaji celebration in Calcutta has come and gone, and it will take some time before the function in this city is repeated. The event has been viewed from different points of view. It has been asked, for instance, what we Bengalis have to do with the memory of a warrior, who has left us the legacy—in recollection at least—of the fabled "Mahratta Ditch." The story reads much like the fable of the "Black Hole." For our part, we prefer to pass over the facts and fancies of this first Sivaji celebration in Calcutta. But we ought to help dispersing some printed fallacies in regard thereto. We have the "special" report of the *Englishman* in view. Again the *Englishman* has attempted, less through perversity of judgment than through a deficiency of a true knowledge of facts, to attach a purely political importance to the Sivaji celebration. However, there are two important admissions, both in our contemporary's report and his leaderette thereon. The report states: "The inaugural address from the chair was, however, both modest and temperate, having a semi-religious flavour * * *." Again, in our contemporary's leaderette, we find these two things: "There was, however, a distinctly political flavour about all the speeches, with the exception of the Chairman's," and "the fact that such a man as Sivaji should be selected after a lapse of two centuries as the hero of Bengal, simply because he was a chosen champion of the Hindu faith is a curious sign of the times." This much is apparent, that the *Englishman* has smelt sedition in this Sivaji celebration, and in the fraternisation of Bengalis and Mahrattas. It does not concern us, whether this particular inference is justified or otherwise. What we ourselves think of the Sivaji celebration has been fairly fully brought out in our articles and other utterances. Our points are mainly two. The first is, that hero-worship is necessary for the uplifting of a nation, and if divided, for its reunion, the next and more important point is, that no one became a hero in India, in whatever walk of life, or appealed to popular imagination, without spirituality and a personal religious and saintly life. Our warriors based their life and life-acts on religion, and therefore they became great, and have been deified and worshipped as heroes. Rama would not be regarded as a warrior saint, or Sivaji similarly in a lesser degree, but for the saintliness of their private lives, their abounding spirituality, and for their unfailing obedience to the will of their spiritual guides or *gurus*. Not that the *gurus* brought them greatness or salvation. But they showed the path. And a willing learner can best help himself and his *karma* by righteousness of conduct, due regard to the weal of those surrounding him by sacrifice of every personal wish or advancement, and by an utter submission to the will of his *guru*. This ideal was foremost in Sivaji's mind, that was his standard of every-day life. That was why we Bengalis celebrated the Sivaji festival in Calcutta.

920. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* observes that, instead of resenting the Sivaji celebration in the demonstration held in honour of Sivaji, the *Englishman*, as an Englishman, should encourage the Bengalis to try and imitate the instincts which have made the English nation great. An old and jealous dotard of a husband will not permit his wife any liberty. The Government, which sees spectres and visions where none exists, shows by its nervousness that it has not a clear conscience. Has it come to this that the glorification of a national hero is sedition in the opinion of a certain class of Englishmen? The *Englishman* abuses Sivaji in the vilest of terms; all the same, he will always be regarded and worshipped as a national hero in this country. Our contemporary thus serves no useful purpose, but only embitters the feelings of the Indians by his uncharitable writing.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
25th June 1902.

921. The following observations on this subject are taken from a leader in the *Bengalee* :—

BENGALÉE,
26th June 1902.

The *Englishman* and the Sivaji demonstration.

The *Englishman* apparently does not like that any demonstration should have been held in honour of Sivaji in the capital of Bengal and with the hearty co-operation and good-will of the Bengalees. Our contemporary recalls memories of bye-gone days, and sadly remarks, the demonstration "is a curious sign of the times."

To the unobservant, the Sivaji demonstration in Calcutta was perhaps "a curious sign of the times." But it is really not so. It is the outcome of those forces which English education and English influences have planted in our midst. The movement at present, it is true, is confined to the upper strata of society, but by that well known law to which John Stuart Mill calls attention, it is bound to filter downwards, permeate the masses and leaven their minds. We are not surprised that the *Englishman* should seek to belittle this growing sentiment of unity and dismiss the celebration, which is so fraught with historic and political significance, with the sage remark that it is a curious sign of the times. It may be curious, but it is certainly the most important sign of the times, of which the rulers of the land would do well to take note. Let them note that the India of to-day is not the India when it came under their rule; that it is not even India, such as India was, half a century ago; that the progressive movement culminating in the unification of the Indian races, is increasing in volume and intensity, and that therefore the old forms of Government must be superseded by a system of administration more in accord with the temper of the times. We are now in a better position than we ever were before to give a dispassionate consideration to the claims of greatness on the part of our own heroes, and Sivaji was one of the greatest of them all. To compare him with Rob Roy or with any of the border-robbers whose names are preserved in legend or commemorated in song is a piece of gross insult to the memory of the greatest Hindu hero of modern times; and we are surprised that the *Englishman* should be guilty of the suggestion that such a comparison is possible. Nobody studied the life of Sivaji with greater care than the late Mr. Justice Ranade. For his opinion, we trust the *Englishman* will have some respect. We have already quoted in these columns his views about Sivaji. For the benefit of the *Englishman*, let us reproduce the extract once again :—

Religious fervour, almost at a white heat, bordering on the verge of self-abnegation, a daring and adventurous spirit born of confidence that a higher power than man's protected him and his work, the magnetism of superior genius which binds men together and leads them to victory, a rare insight into the real needs of the times, a steadfastness of purpose which no adverse turn of fortune could conquer, a readiness and resourcefulness rarely met with either in European or Indian history, true patriotism which was far in advance of the times and a sense of justice tempered with mercy—these were the sources of the strength which enabled Sivaji to sow the seeds of a power, which accomplished in the hands of his successors all that he had planned out and enabled his race to write a chapter in Indian history to some purpose.

922. The following comments on the despatch by the Nepal Government of eight young men to Japan for their education are taken from the *Bengalee* :—

BENGALÉE,
25th June 1902.

The education of Nipali youths in Japan.

We have heard much of the demerits of native rule in India; but if India had been under native rule even a comparatively poor State, like that of Nepal, would not have allowed itself to

be left behind in this march of economic progress which is led by Japan and followed by many a backward Eastern country. We trust, however, the Government of India will benefit by the example set by Nepal, and send some Indian youths to Japan or to any European country for the study of the technical arts.

BEHAR HERALD,
25th June 1902.

923. The *Behar Herald* expresses the view that to attain the benefits of agitation, it must not be carried on in the desultory, unsystematic, fitful fashion it is sustained

How to agitate.

at present. It should be persistent and applied to one or two questions at a time, and should also be backed by the publication of tracts and pamphlets. "With a strong faith in the good sense of our rulers," concludes the *Herald*, "we have now only to set our own house in order. Pecking and carping at one another will only disfigure our own faces."

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
26th June 1902.

924. Referring to the Madras Provincial Conference lately held at Coconada, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* advises the organisers of such conferences in future to devise a practical scheme by which local interests might

The utility of Provincial Conferences.

be protected and promoted, and pass a few resolutions in regard to the immediate and pressing wants of the people, as well as appoint Committees to carry on a systematic and sustained agitation throughout the year with reference to these particular subjects. It recommends every district to have its own agents whose work would be education, agitation and organization.

BENGALIEE,
26th June 1902.

925. The *Bengalee* comments as follows on the refusal of the Sub-Registrar of Bara Bazar Registry office to register a deed presented by Brahmanand Saraswati Swami,

Grievances of a *sadhu*.

because the latter, acting in accordance with his religious customs, would not affix his thumb impression to it:—

The invariable policy of the British Government in India has been to hold in the highest regard the religious scruples of the people, and we believe the legislature had the same purpose in view when enacting legislative measures. We are, therefore, of opinion that the Sub-Registrar could easily have varied the procedure in this instance, specially when the *bona-fides* of the transaction was not in question. We trust Sir John Woodburn, who has been informed of the occurrence by wire, will, with his characteristic regard for the cherished religious feelings of the people, pass such orders as the nature of the case demands.

BENGALIEE,
28th June 1902.

926. The *Bengalee* is distinctly opposed to the establishment in England of a Home for Indian students. Such a home, it says,

A Home for Indian students in England.

will be a great boarding-house for Indian students where they will live by themselves, inaccessible to those English influences which form the most valuable feature of a training in England. The Indian students will speak their own language, exchange their own thoughts and deepen their racial and local angularities. The utility of their stay in England would be completely lost. What it should like to suggest is that arrangements should be made by a properly organized Committee for the admission of Indian students into English families, where they will live as members of the family and subject to all its discipline and control. Living in the family, they will have an insight into the best features of English home-life, its domesticity, its purity, its sweet orderliness. They will come under English influences in their best form and profit by them. It would be easy enough to find gentlemen who would form themselves into a Committee for a purpose such as this. They may have a paid Secretary who will be their executive officer. They will have a list of eligible families where arrangements might be made for the accommodation of Indian students. A periodical inspection might take place. These are the main features of a scheme which, it thinks, would recommend itself to the approval of Indian public opinion.

BENGALIEE,
29th June 1902.

927. The *Bengalee* in a lengthy article, reviews the several occasions on which Indian Princes were exploited by means of official pressure being put upon them and made to

Ibid.

contribute towards the maintenance of such institutions as the National Indian Association, the Northbrook India Society, the Imperial Institute which were at first designed to benefit Indian students. A similar fate, it says, awaits the scheme of Mr. Morrison, the Principal of the Aligarh College, for the establishment

of a hostel for Indian students, should he succeed in inducing Lord George Hamilton to exploit the Indian Princes now in England. Such a scheme, it remarks, started under the auspices of the India Office, is bound to fail. Should it succeed, however, it will go towards benefiting Muhammadans and not Hindu students, however generously, as in the case of the Aligarh College, Hindu Princes might subscribe to it.

OFFICE OF THE INSPR.-GENERAL
OF POLICE, L. P.,
WRITERS' BUILDINGS,
The 5th July 1902.

H. B. ST. LEGER,
Asst. to the Insp.-General of Police, L. P.

